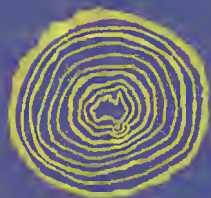


Australian Garden HISTORY



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SOCIETY

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AUSTRALIAN HISTORY GARDEN SOCIETY

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The Australian Garden History Society will be the leader in concern for and conservation of significant cultural landscapes and gardens through committed, relevant and sustainable action.

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Cover: A selection of tiles from the above work.

Neil Douglas: The Founding of Eltham 1961. 24 stoneware tiles underglaze decoration, 103 cm x 72 cm, signed l.r. underglaze Neil Douglas.

Heide Museum of Modern Art.

Purchased from John and Sunday Reed 1980.

Neil Douglas lived at Heide as a working gardener in 1939 and developed the 'wild garden' there.

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MORE ON THE PLANT LISTS AT MOOLERIC & TURKEITH

The plant lists in the article celebrating the centenary of William Guilfoyle's work at Mooleric, ['Mooleric and Turkeith', *Australian Garden History* Volume 15 No 2, September/October 2003, pp. 9-20] were records of a garden at a particular period in its history, rather than a comprehensive list of all planting.

The plant list for Mooleric, prepared in 1993, was from a relatively modern survey of the garden—that made by Francine Gilfedder for the Heritage Branch of the Department of Planning and Development in *Mooleric, Birregurra, Garden Conservation Plan 1994*.

Appendix 6 of this work, consisting of 11 pages, shows facsimile copies of Guilfoyle's Plant Lists for Mooleric 1904 and 1905 in his own hand and includes descriptions, suggested locations and other comments for Mrs Ramsay. The space available in a 12-page article on Guilfoyle's two private gardens at Birregurra did not allow the inclusion of such a list.

The Guilfoyle plant lists for Turkeith were taken from Marika Kocsis' work *Turkeith, Birregurra, a Landscape Conservation Analysis and Management Plan*. This was an academic study in 1997 for the degree of Bachelor of Applied Science (Horticulture) from the Victorian College of Agriculture and Horticulture, Burnley Campus of the University of Melbourne.

That list showed the earlier plant nomenclature, Guilfoyle's spelling and use of capital letters together with the botanical names current in 1997. Six years later there have been further changes and the plant lists were given to John Hawker, Horticulturist at Heritage Victoria for comment. He consulted with Dr Roger Spencer at the Herbarium, Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne, and their comments are offered for the botanical and plant list aficionados among our readers.

Nina Crone
Editor

GUILFOYLE PLANT LISTS - TURKEITH

1906 LIST

Eucalyptus calophylla rosea, is now *Corymbia calophylla* 'Rosea'. It was described and selected by Guilfoyle. Today there is a splendid example near the cottage in the Hamilton Botanic Gardens.

Bougainvillea Traillei is now *Bougainvillea spectabilis* 'Magnifica'

Corylus purpurea avellana is possibly *Corylus purpurea* 'Fuscorubra'

Eritrina indica is now *Erythrina variegata*

Bougainvillea Sanderiana is *Bougainvillea spectabilis* 'Sanderiana'

Populus monilifera aurea is *Populus x canadensis* 'Aurea'

1907 LIST

Bursaria pantonii is *Eremophila pantonii* from Western Australia

Duranta stenostachya should read *Duranta stenostachya Virgilia capensis* is now *Virgilia oroboides*

MOOLERIC PLANT LIST 1994

Cotoneaster glaucophyllus should read *Cotoneaster glaucophyllus* subsp. *serotinus*

Bosea anliertiana is rarely grown in Victoria. I do not know of any other existing examples of this plant except in the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne.

Prunus lyonii is the only example of this tree known to be growing in Victoria.

Phaedranthus buccinatorius is now known as *Distinctus buccinatorius*. Guilfoyle produced a sketch of this and labelled it as *Bignonia Cherere* from Guiana (although it is from Mexico).

This sketch is held among the Andrew Ramsay Papers in the State Library of Victoria where it is recorded by Guilfoyle in a letter 5/7/1905 as having been sent c.1903 or later. I have grown *Distinctus buccinatorius* in the Melbourne suburb of Windsor and seen it growing in Grey Street, East Melbourne.

Homalocladium platycladum is rarely grown in Victoria. It is indigenous to the Solomon Islands.

Podochaenium emuensis is rarely grown in Victoria.

Maytenus boaria is rarely grown in Victoria. It originates from Chile.

Cussonia spicata has large divided leaves and is rarely grown in Victoria. It is from South Africa.

Colletia paradoxa, formerly *C. cruciata*, with broad triangular thorns, is rarely grown in Victoria.

The foregoing comments highlight the fact that Mooleric has many rare plants that would normally only be found in botanic gardens. Their presence at Mooleric further demonstrates 'the Guilfoyle influence' in that garden.

John Hawker
Horticulturist, Heritage Victoria



BOUQUETS for the GOVERNOR'S LADY

BY GLENN COOKE

THIS ARTICLE REFLECTS THE LONG-STANDING TRADITION OF PRESENTING BOUQUETS OF FLOWERS TO THE OFFICIATING NOTEWORTHY AT PUBLIC OPENINGS AND FUNCTIONS.

In the years I have been researching the visual arts in Queensland I noted that some of the descriptions of the openings at annual art exhibitions mentioned the flowers that were presented. This was simply a matter of general interest until I came across a description of a bouquet of 'salpiglossis and delphiniums'. That stuck in my mind because, although a keen gardener from early childhood, I had never seen a salpiglossis - except in Yates Gardening Guide - and for that matter I still haven't seen the 'real thing'.

FLOWERS FOR IMPORTANT OCCASIONS

The years 1930-1940 were a particularly productive time in Brisbane's art scene as the Royal Queensland Art Society and the Arts and Crafts Society of Queensland enjoyed popular support. Another art organisation the Half Dozen Group of Artists was founded in September, 1941 and the accompanying photograph and report of the inaugural exhibition gives the most comprehensive reading of the ambience created by flowers I have located. A contemporary report began:

Touches of spring were the keynote yesterday of the Half Dozen Group art exhibition held in aid of the Red Cross at the City Hall Art Gallery. Bowls of real flowers, the bright flower paintings, the hand loom wearings and the spring and summer frocks and posies of the women visitors all provided a touch of spring to the gallery.

Some descriptions of the costumes were given ... Cherry red was the colour chosen by Mrs A. E. Fowles who added a posy of sweet peas to harmonise. ... Flowers patterned the white jacket worn by Vida Lahey. ... A spray of blue natural flowers was pinned to the shoulder-line of the tartan frock in burgundy and blue toning worn by Mrs L. Williams.¹

In the photograph you can see Lilian Pedersen, one of the co-founders of the Group admiring a bowl of poppies while both she and Mona Elliott are wearing posies of orchids. We can be sure Lady Wilson will shortly be presented



with a bouquet of flowers after she and Sir Leslie (Governor 1932-46) completed the tour of the displays. The arrangement of poppies seen here was probably the work of Mrs L. J. Harvey, another art supporter and wife of the potter, sculptor and teacher L.J. Harvey. On her passing in 1969 it was recorded that:

Her floral arrangements at our earlier exhibitions were always a sheer delight, and a great attraction. No one has been able to take her place in that particular sphere.²

When the newly appointed Governor took up duties in Brisbane his wife was invited to be the patroness of the Arts and Crafts Society of Queensland. One of her duties was to launch the Society's annual exhibition, the financial and social high point of the year. The role of flowers described in 1941 attests their importance to the artistic environment of this period. But it was only during in the 1930s that such descriptions occasionally appear in the general discussions of the official openings. In 1930 Lady Goodwin wife of the former Governor (1927-32) exhibited a quilt made of the ribbons of the bouquets she had been presented with during her stay in Queensland. At the launch of the Arts and

Inaugural exhibition of the Half Dozen Group of Artists 1941.

From the left: Lilian Pedersen, Lady Wilson, Mona Elliott, and Sir Leslie Orme Wilson, Governor of Queensland.

Courtesy: Lilian Pedersen Papers, Queensland Art Gallery Library.

Crafts Society in the same year Lady Goodwin was presented with a bouquet of orchids but without the identification in the report. One would be hard pressed to recognise the flowers because of the poor quality of reproduction in contemporary newspapers.³

We can be sure that the flowers selected were the choicest and/or the most exotic in the member's garden. In December 1935, it was noted that Mrs C.W. White of New Farm grew the orchids that were presented to Lady Wilson at that year's display of the Arts and Crafts Society. Edith White was one of the stalwarts of the Society and an accomplished potter and china painter who frequently incorporated flowers into her decoration. As her parents had a nursery in New Farm as well as a florist's shop in the Valley she was well acquainted with growing and displaying flowers.

Lacking their own premises the Arts and Crafts Society held meetings and social events at the Lyceum Club, a prominent women's group. When a party was held there in April 1931, to honour the recently retired president, Mrs Winifred Scott Fletcher, 'dahlias decked the room'. The following year in June an 'At Home' was held by the new president Mrs Bruce Shearer who wore a posy of pink *Radiance* roses surrounded with wattle while 'on occasional tables scattered about the room vases of pink sweetpeas and jonquils formed a vivid decorative note'. In August another year 'poinsettias and marigolds formed the decoration' (but hopefully not together). In May 1935 it was recorded that the rooms '... were bright with gladioli, nasturtiums and gaillardias.' When flowers were scarce palms and baskets of greenery decorated the rooms.

Two years later in October when Sir John Blair, the Lieutenant Governor, opened the exhibition his wife, Lady Blair, was presented with a bouquet of pink carnations and roses intermingled with delphiniums. On this occasion it was mentioned that Miss Mervyn Jones arranged the bowls of mixed flowers which 'enhanced the appearance of the exhibition.' In November 1939 Lady Wilson was presented with the bouquet of delphiniums and salpiglossis mentioned in my introduction. It was also recorded that the Exhibition Convenor, Miss Hope Mackenzie, arranged the bowls of mixed flowers described as '... attractive bits of living loveliness amongst the inanimate beauty of the exhibits'.

FLOWERS AND CRAFTWORK

Both Miss Jones and Miss Mackenzie had a long association with the Arts and Crafts Society and set up the Artcraft Studio after they left the Central Technical College in 1919. There they

produced a wide range of craft items such as pokerwork decorated with flowering iris and ceramics with a design of trailing Virginia creeper. One of their most interesting projects was to provide ball decorations such as those for the Moreton Club, but not all the flowers were natural. 'The "tulip time" ballroom recently seen in Brisbane was a marvel of colour, and the atmosphere of a Dutch town was brought into an otherwise unsightly hall by these clever girls.'⁴

Miss Jones and later Miss Mackenzie supervised the spectacular floral arrangements in the foyer of the Wintergarden Theatre that used over 1000 blooms a week. (These flowers were from the commercial growers on Mt Tamborine.) The photograph which demonstrates the use of flowers in exhibitions most clearly is of the 1940 exhibition. Carnations, narcissus and candytuft appear in the vase surmounting the display shelves in the centre of the room, while the three women to the left wear posies.

The columnist of the *Truth* mentioned in her "Jottings of a lady about town" that:

*In the midst of cocktail shaking and sherry parties given by juniors it is good to see by the Arts and Crafts exhibitions that there are still many gals who can use the needle, potter to colourful effect, beat pewter instead of drinking beer from it, and make lace. I was astonished to see what delicate tapestries, lovely lace, beautiful pottery and embroidery these gals can do - they obviously don't give all their time to the ballrooms, the beach and bridge.*⁵

I don't think many of the ladies of the Arts and Crafts Society would have had the time for such events as, apart from their homes, families and their various craft activities, they had their gardens to occupy their remaining time. They did however partake in bridge parties when they were fund-raising for the Society. In 1935 a photograph in *The Brisbane Courier* of a bridge party held at the Brisbane City Hall reveals a vase of anemones and another of geraniums behind the group.

"Jottings" also mentioned the flowers in the embroideries 'exquisitely worked by Mrs W. C. Carmody and Miss Dorothy Prentice' in the 1936 exhibition. Mrs Carmody exhibited embroidered curtains of her own design. These were probably inspired by the flowers in her garden, as embroidery was noted as one of her hobbies in *The Biographical Record of Queensland Women*. The curtains survive in her daughter's collection but this survival is quite an exception as use, compounded with Queensland's humid climate have destroyed most textiles. Dorothy Prentice was a prominent embroiderer and needleworker for the Arts and Crafts Society and was an equally enthusiastic gardener.



*Needlework has always been one of Miss Prentice's chief interests, but she is also fond of gardening, though these two hobbies are not usually found together, for hands accustomed to gripping the spade and firming the soil around the roots of seedlings are not, as a rule, the ones that take kindly to embroidery silks and fine white sewing. However, Miss Prentice manages to combine the two hobbies (though, of course, she wears gloves for her gardening), and the flower beds have provided some of her most attractive original designs, as, for instance a row of white marguerites, growing up from the hem of a saxe blue crepe apron. The flowers are of braid, with yellow centres ...*⁶

But I have yet to locate any example of her work.

Leatherwork was a popular craft as well but it suffers even more in Brisbane's summer humidity. However the Gallery has a wallet with a poinsettia motif and a writing album with a stylised seedpod which is the work of Jessie Philp in the 1930 Arts and Crafts Society exhibition. Pokerwork was also produced in substantial quantities and frequently decorated with the poinsettia flower, accepted as Brisbane's floral emblem at the formation of the Brisbane City Council in 1929. Much pokerwork survives but, unfortunately, it is usually anonymous.

Pottery was an important component of these exhibitions but stylised neo-Renaissance motifs were favoured. The most common foliate decoration was, of course, gum leaves and nuts.

There was a renewed interest in motifs from the Australian bush. A review of the 1938 annual exhibition began 'Australian wildflowers ... have provided the inspiration for designs used by many members of the Arts and Crafts Society.'⁷ Such motifs were noted on the china decorated by Mrs E. G. Duncan, Miss Alice Bott and Mrs Josephine Reeve but china painting was a craft that had few adherents when compared to the southern states. The illuminated texts by Lilian Pedersen and the designs of boronia, wattle and other wildflowers bordering her framed text of *An Australian sunrise* received particular praise. Lilian Pedersen excelled at many crafts but illumination was her special forte.

THE ARTISTS' GARDENS

Gardening was as popular a hobby during the 1930s as now, but it is extremely difficult to find photographs of the gardens that produced the flowers and inspiration. The most that can be expected is a photograph taken in a garden setting such as the picture of Ruby Rookwood in her garden at Ascog Terrace, Toowong. Carrie Joyce, a Harvey School potter and wood carver had a large garden that included 100 rose bushes, and she oversaw the flower stall at the 1932 fete for the Royal Queensland Art Society at the home of Mrs Arthur Baker, Bronte, Norman Park. We may assume that she contributed liberally from her garden. Daisy Nosworthy was an exceptional potter, woodcarver and jeweller who lived at

The Arts and Crafts Society of Queensland annual exhibition 1 October 1940 held in the Brisbane City Hall Basement.



Ruby Rookwood in her garden.

Clayfield but the only documentation of her gardening skills is from the 1970s when she had retired to Redcliffe.

There were other floral connections. "Cassia" the gardening columnist for the *Courier Mail* and *Sunday Mail* until his death in 1946 was Mr Fred Woodroffe but his wife, Agnes continued the column for another two years. Her craft, however, was woollen rugs that did not include floral motifs although she exhibited floral paintings at the Queensland Art Society in the early decades of this century.

Few descriptions of floral arrangements are found in press reports of the openings of the annual exhibitions of the Royal Queensland Art Society. It was the Governor who was invited to be Patron of this Society and while his Lady would have been present on many of these occasions, 'ART' was an altogether more serious business and it appears the columnist did not have the opportunity for chit-chat. Flowers, however, would have played the same role in decorating the displays as at the Arts and Crafts Society's exhibitions. A newspaper photograph in 1934 that reveals the honorary secretary, Gladys Powell,

arranging flowers in a L. J. Harvey vase is a rare exception. Perhaps it was even a dominant role as Muriel Foote's husband remarked when they were leaving for Sydney that 'He was glad to be getting away from Queensland florals'.⁸

The only descriptions located are for the years 1935 and 1937. In 1935 Lady Wilson was presented with a bouquet of purple stocks and petunias,⁹ while at the opening of the 49th Annual Exhibition in 1937, the Lieutenant Governor Sir James Blair was given a sheaf of delphiniums and pink carnations for Lady Blair (who was not present at the occasion). Later the same year when the Queensland Art Society held its Golden Jubilee Reception it was reported that 'bowls of roses and bougainvilleas have been chosen for the floral decoration', while at the evening reception 'posies of flowers whether real or fabric adorned most of the ladies present'.¹⁰

There were, however, other flowers presented on such Vice-Regal occasions – the still-life pictures on the walls. Consideration of these will be the next part of my study to appear in the forthcoming issue of *Australian Garden History*.

Gleim R. Cooke, Curator of Decorative Arts at the Queensland Art Gallery, is Chairman of the Queensland Branch of the Australian Garden History Society.

- 1 Flashback- September 5th 1941, Half Dozen Group of Artists 23rd Annual Exhibition, 9-25 Sept., 1963, n.p.
- 2 Half Dozen Group of Artists 29th Annual Report 20 April, 1970.
- 3 *The Brisbane Courier* 11 Nov. 1930.
- 4 As one entered the hall through an arch of latticework, entwined with fern, a long, red brick wall hiding the stage met the eye covered with trails of real ivy. Standing on the wall were pots of green foliage and clusters of tulips which varied in colour from bright flame to heliotrope, deep purple to palest yellow. Palest apricot draped the side windows, and window boxes painted jade green held clusters of bright tulips. The lights were veiled in short fluffy looking streamers in tones of scarlet orange and lemon with short lengths of scarlet draping the walls. Large bunches of balloons in all tones hung at intervals round the wall and on the stage a flaxen haired Gretchen and young Hans, complete with patches, gave the final touch of old Holland. Every flower that was used in the work – there are thousands in each varying scheme – is made by the nimble fingers of these girls. *Women's Budget* 21/9/1930
- 5 *The Truth*, 15/11/1936.
- 6 *Sunday Mail* 21/10/1936.
- 7 *The Courier Mail* 25/10/1938
- 8 Interview with Margaret Collerton 15/5/1993.
- 9 *The Daily Standard* 26 Sept. 1935
- 10 *The Brisbane Courier* 27 Oct. 1937

On Tour

DISCOVERING THE DARLING DOWNS AND BUNYA MOUNTAINS—PART 2

BY MARIE HOLLINGWORTH, JOAN LOW
AND STUART READ

Above: Morning mist off
the water at Cloudlake.

After the impressive Bunya Mountains our return to Toowoomba was 'off the beaten track', along dirt roads and through tiny townships, sometimes of only a few dwellings. On the way we learned about the changing history of the area. Always agricultural, growing a variety of crops as times and markets dictated, the bigger towns such as Oakey also had butter factories processing the local milk and Warwick cheeses were renowned. Many of these have long been closed.

Good quality black coal was mined by the underground method in the Oakey/Ackland area. Taking over from the Ipswich mines, they supplied local industries such as the railways and the Toowoomba foundry for many years. The discovery of natural gas and the laying of the pipeline conveying this to the metropolis plus the conversion of the railways to diesel took away the markets for coal and the mines closed in the 1970s. Now a second pipeline carrying oil also traverses this region of the Downs.

Another large holding, **Old Gowrie** initially stretched from Oakey to Toowoomba. Its second owner, George King, built the present grand homestead in 1869. When the government resumed Gowrie Station for subdivision in 1901 he bought back the homestead block and lived there till 1915. Recent owners, the Newbury family from Moree, have planted an extensive vineyard and have already won a number of awards with their wines.

We were fortunate to arrive just before sundown, so were able to appreciate the garden

and the beautiful outlook from the wide verandahs across the peaceful countryside. The family is justly proud of their careful restorations, with unique wrought iron balustrades now returned to former splendour after rusting in a paddock.

We were also treated to a spectacular golden sunset, seen through the black silhouettes of some of the original large trees at the rear of the homestead. Notable was a lovely, remnant old apple oak (possibly *Angophora subvelutina*), very like the apple oaks of Camden and Wollondilly south of Sydney with picturesque twisted corkscrew branches, weeping tips and pleasingly umbrageous form.

More recent plantings of roses and perennials give colour to this charming garden. From the broad front stairs, the distant lights of Toowoomba started to twinkle out as evening descended and we entered the gracious, immaculately maintained homestead to sample some of the fine wines the property now produces before the family entertained us to a magnificent 'Christmas in July' dinner.

For the trip Toowoomba was our base. It offered morning exercise and inspiration by way of **Queen's Park** with its massive trunks of Queensland kauri (*Agathis robusta*) towering some 20m above the botanic gardens. Also notable and eye-catching are the shimmering silver-blue fronds of Yatay or jelly palms (*Butia capitata*) from Brazil and Argentina, and avenues of camphor laurel (*Cinnamomum camphora*), the unofficial emblem of the town.

Below: Philip Skinner's
terrace garden in
Toowoomba.
Courtesy: Trish Dixon.





Top left: *Angophora subvelutina* at Old Gowrie homestead.
Courtesy: Stuart Read.

Top right: The B & B cottage 'Mother of Ducks' overlooks the water at Cloudlake.
Courtesy: Stuart Read.

Above: Jane Ashton and Bruce Myles enjoy 'Christmas Dinner in July' at Old Gowrie homestead.
Courtesy: Trish Dixon.

And we received wonderful hospitality in two Toowoomba homes. Firstly Bruce and Ann Hawker had all 38 of us to dinner at their lovely home on the 'Range' on Monday night. Then, as we left Toowoomba on Wednesday we visited **Philip Skinner's Town Garden**. Purchased in 1989 because of its location – views on a clear day for

30 miles or more – Philip has developed a three level summer garden, full of surprises – in an area where cows once grazed. For Stuart Read, the garden held some favourite exotics. They were – marmalade bush (*Streptosolen jamesonii*) with its head of orange bloom; the large cup-of-gold climber *Solandra gigantea* with coconut-scented 15cm goblets and shiny leaves; and the Madagascan *Kelanchoe beharensis*, a tree form with hairy triangular leaves of a grey/blue/ginger sheen, rising to spectacular metre-squared inflorescences.

With great imagination the three levels of garden have been created each giving superb views – over the escarpment and into the neighbour's beautiful garden – and framed by evergreen trees. The lowest level, the secret garden, was filled with colour from low growing perennials and succulents despite it being the middle of winter. Here the central rectangular garden was so filled with colour that when viewed from above it looked like a carpet.

An additional highlight was the visit to the **Toowoomba Art Gallery** to view the exhibition 'Hemispheres of Light', the gift of artworks, illuminated, scientific and other manuscripts and letters from late 17th to mid 20th centuries donated in January 2003 by the Cay family, residents of Toowoomba. Most fascinating are historic photographs from 1840s, the dawn of photography, that confirm the role of John Cay, a member of the Edinburgh Calotype Club – the world's first photographic club – as an amateur practitioner in the early history of British photography.

Time permitted only the most cursory inspection of these historic documents. However, Marie Hollingworth discovered a letter from Colonel (later General Sir Edward) Sabine (1788–1883) apologising for delays in writing letters of introduction for Robert Cay who was emigrating to Australia. In her childhood on the Downs she recalls a tiny railway 'siding' with wooden building barely six feet long. The train would stop here, in the middle of nowhere, to drop off passengers probably farm and mine workers. Today it would be 20 minutes drive from Oakey! This little siding was called – Sabine.

Leaving Toowoomba we travelled north through an area settled by German immigrants and still boasting an authentic Cuckoo Clock Shop, then through the Ravensbourne National Park, until we reached **Cloudlake**, 'where the dew falls', the property created by Richard and Rosemary Jones, nestled in a secret valley at



Left: A Mediterranean style garden surrounds Richard and Rosemary Jones' home at Cloudlake.
Courtesy: Trish Dixon.

2000feet. Aesthetically a well-established Mediterranean garden surrounds the rustic home but a lush rainforest complete with hidden pools and bird populations remains in the gully. Truly a delight to discover.

This is a new venture, aiming to be self-sufficient in sustainable organic farming. Begun part-time 13 years ago, Richard and Rosemary have resided here for two years. The land has had a varied history – timber getting, (much of it red cedar), dairying twenty years ago, and avocados. Now market gardens are developing, olive, avocado, citrus, pecan nut and persimmon trees are planted, and ten pregnant ewes are about to arrive to graze beneath the olive trees beyond the lake. Two B&B cottages are operational overlooking the man-made, perch-stocked lake, the centrepiece of the property. Guests are encouraged to cook with home-grown produce as Rosemary is a member of the Slow Food Convivium.

For Stuart Read, Cloudlake was another highlight. He admired the welcoming drive lined with drifts of towering 20m eucalypts and ending with groves of Gyneria lilies (*Doryanthes excelsa*) marking arrival. An avenue of young pistachio trees leading to the main house lent delicate tracery to our advance. A rainforest gully divided the more ornamental part of the property from the olive groves, and down it were dense belts of Bangalow palms (*Archontophoenix cunninghamiana*) and the tallest black bean trees (*Castanospermum australe*) he had seen with their lustrous pinnate leaves and striking pods. Cloudlake, a new inclusion in the Australian

Open Garden Scheme this year, will be open on 17 and 18 April 2004.

The pervading peacefulness of Cloudlake remained with Marie Hollingworth even after her return to Brisbane and she means to return to stay in 'Mother of Ducks' to experience the beauty of morning breaking over the lake. For her too there was some nostalgia in revisiting regions she knew well from childhood and seeing places she had only heard about. The histories of the early properties have many similarities from their pastoral beginnings, aboriginal influences, progression through other industries, the coming of immigrant populations. Now, once again they are responding to changing demands as younger generations from pastoral families explore new ventures to ensure future viability.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

Much of the information used in this article was obtained from material provided by Trish Dixon.

Marie Hollingworth, who grew up in the town of Oakey on the Darling Downs, recorded the history of the area and the changes in patterns of livelihood, transport and leisure activities over the last thirty years. Joan Low from Perth added her impressions of gardens on the opposite side of the continent from her home state Western Australia, and Stuart Read, from New South Wales seasoned the account with knowledgeable botanical observations.

TROPICAL PLEASURES



THE 24TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE HELD
IN BRISBANE, 10-12 JULY 2003

PROFESSOR CATHERINE BULL REPORTS ON
THE PAPERS PRESENTED ON FRIDAY 10 JULY &
SATURDAY 11 JULY

It was my role to sum up the formal conference proceedings in Brisbane, prior to the field trips and my comments focussed on the way in which various speakers explored the idea of what the tropical landscape actually is. There was plenty of variety in this as can be seen from the key ideas the speakers put to the audience.

In her keynote address **Dr Jean Sim** introduced us to the idea of 'tropicalia' and the various writers who define this notion. She reminded us that the tropical landscape can be flamboyant and ugly as well as beautiful, and that it has a rich and complex tradition, exotic in flavour although local in application.

To **Catherine Brouwer** who described the Acclimatisation Gardens at Bowen Park, Brisbane, and to **John Taylor** who described the history of the Rockhampton Botanic Gardens, the tropical landscape was one of loss with complexity and richness often overlaid or eradicated with progressive re-development and somewhat thoughtless disregard of earlier endeavours. The idea of loss also pervaded **Bruce Perrott's** description of his family's plant nursery in Brisbane, including nursery techniques and plant varieties now virtually forgotten.

The clash between the propriety of settlers' expectations and the challenge of extreme tropical weather and rampant growth underlay the historic analyses of Brisbane's 1950s Oasis Pleasure Gardens ('only for a better class of person') by **Glenn Cooke** and **Jinx Miles'** analysis of an early resort garden at Paronella Park, just south of Cairns, a fantasy garden that appears overgrown and is often in a 'green fog'.

Continuing with this theme, **Dr Dinah Hansman** from Townsville, took us on a tour of

the vagaries of gardening in the dry tropics where extreme wet can be followed by even more extreme dry. She reminded us that Australia's tropics are not always wet, no matter what gardeners would like to think – and that these contrasts can arouse extreme passions in response. Such passions were personified in the life and works of the pioneering flower painter **Ellis Rowan** as described by her biographer **Judith Mackay**. Rowan painted the spectacular and exuberant plants of the tropics and their settings with 'ferocious intensity', braving many a challenging situation to achieve her goals.

To **Maurice Wilson**, the Queenslander garden, unlike its southern counterparts, could simply never be prim or fussy – the climate makes that impossible. It could, however, be voluptuous (although **Dr Peter Spearitt** used the terms quaint and rebellious).

Dr Jane Lennon took us on a journey to the Scenic Rim on the NSW/Queensland border, and the historic tourist landscapes of the mountain retreats of O'Reilly's and Binnaburra. On a more contemporary note, **Kate Green** described contrasting traditions in resort landscapes that range between the unashamed opulence of the exotic gardens at Marina Mirage and the restrained, water sensitive naturalism of Couran Cove, both on the Gold Coast.

Ross McKinnon delivered a paper by **Malcolm Bunzli** about the great plantsman and landscape architect Harry Oakman. It reminded us of the toughness required to achieve great works in this environment, a point driven home by Laurie Smith's discussion of his recent work to bring the major subtropical display garden at Brisbane's Roma Street Parklands to life.

Perhaps the most powerful image amongst all of this in my mind, is the memory of a graceful, dignified and robust property garden and landscape at Gracemere,¹ near Rockhampton, where many exotic influences have fused with

the inherent characteristics of the site's topography, lagoon and climate. Here the many and varied adjectives used to evoke a sense of the tropics seem somehow to have been made coherent and come to rest.

Through these discussions ran a common thread. The exploration of tropical landscapes provided an opportunity to explore the idea of difference – the different psyche of the people who live in the tropics and sub-tropics, the different climate and plant life, and the inherent drama of life in this part of Australia. At this Australian Garden History conference we heard about a landscape of difference and extremes. *Vive la différence!*

Catherin Bull is Elisabeth Murdoch Professor of Landscape Architecture at the University of Melbourne.

- 1 Jan Seto presented the paper 'The Garden at Gracemere' by Laura Emmison. The Queensland Branch of AGHS was successful in its advocacy for grants to conserve this garden.

NINA CRONE REPORTS ON THE GARDENS VISITED DURING THE CONFERENCE

For one who gardens on a wild and windy shore of Bass Strait, the Queensland garden visits offered an insight into a new world.

SATURDAY 12 JULY

The Roma Street Parklands. Two years old, these 16 hectares of tropical gardens present a kaleidoscope of small individual gardens to set off Queensland's largest outdoor public art collection, including the serene sandstone



sculptures of AGHS member Rhyl Hinwood. Many of the art works reflect the past history of the site – as indigenous meeting place, railway yards, army barracks and a cultural venue. Harry Oakman's elegant planting in the older hillside section garden, particularly the Foxtail Palm Avenue, and the new fern gully planting by the

water courses are tranquil places of refreshment after the intense and riotous colour of the Spectacle Garden.

Fernberg, Bardon. Built in 1865–6 as a villa for German emigré J.C. Heussler, Fernberg was purchased in 1910 as a residence for the state governor. The site is about 8.9 hectares with lawns shaded by abundant foliage trees, terraced rose gardens (Hybrid Teas and Floribundas), and a



camellia garden. The ridge on which the Italian Revival house stands, still retains much of the natural eucalypt forest. There is a memorable Poinciana splendidly displaying the symmetry of this species.

SUNDAY 13 JULY

Hundscheidt Garden, Sunnybank. Dennis Hundscheidt grew up in one of Brisbane's legendary sites. His childhood home was the Oasis Tourist Gardens. Today he has extended the exotic tropical concept to a more sophisticated level, importing seeds and plants from Indonesia and Malaysia and deriving design inspiration from traditional Balinese gardens integrating carved stone and wood artefacts, brilliant oriental cushions, pavilions and umbrellas with heliconias, gingers, mussaendas, frangipanis and bamboos.

Tallaringa Gardens, Tamborine Mountain. Originally settled during the selection period of the 1870s, the garden was established in 1922 when two Melbourne doctors, Vonda and Vincent Youngman, bought the property. Their son John and his wife assumed care of the garden in 1984. Its 10 hectares spread to the edge of the plateau and tumble over the escarpment. Visitors first pass



Above and below left:
The Spectacle Garden in
the Roma Street Parklands,
Brisbane.
Courtesy: Helen Page.

Above: Asian influence in
Dennis Hundscheidt's garden
at Sunnybank.
Courtesy: Helen Page.



Above: Dennis
Hundscheidt's garden at
Sunnybank.
Courtesy: Helen Page.

Right: Maroochy Bushland
Botanical Garden
Courtesy: Helen Page.

through the avocado orchard, then enter the shadowy coolness of the magnificent tropical rainforest with towering hoop pines, black beans and macadanias bearing elkhorn or staghorn ferns, before bursting into the brilliant light and breathtaking views of the Millennium Garden. From here the high-rise buildings on the Gold Coast appear as a row of teeth edging the Pacific Ocean. Whatever your taste in plants, there was something of interest in this multi-faceted mountain-top garden.

Mount Cotton Rainforest Garden. There were also spectacular views from the Mount Cotton Rainforest Garden – west to the mountains of the Scenic Rim, south to Tamborine Mountain, the islands (North Stradbroke, Peel, Coochiemudlo and Macleay) and the Gold Coast, east to Moreton Island and north to the Glass House Mountains. But it was a steep climb to see them. Many plants in the garden reflect the history of land use in the area. Mangos were sent to the Brisbane market or used in a local chutney factory and a few of the original trees remain. Immigrants of many nationalities came to the area to farm – Germans as early as the 1860s, Chinese at the turn of the century planting lychees and possibly the Chinese raisin tree and the Fuji

persimmon growing in the area known as Betty's Brook. The distinctive Swiss chalet style house is the legacy of a previous owner who hailed from Switzerland. In the 1930s a landslip created a terrace and pond which have been effectively used in landscaping today's garden offering picturesque settings for family celebrations and serving as a venue for many community activities.

OPTIONAL DAY – MONDAY 14 JULY

The **Everingham Family Property**, near Yandina was reached by travelling north past the distinctive Glasshouse Mountains named by Captain Cook. Hidden in State Forest this impressive property is a productive ginger farm, now also growing lychees and housing creative studios for fine jewellery and decorative ironwork. The garden brims over with quintessential sub-tropical plants – gingers galore, baubins, heliconias, jacaranda, pink frangipani, allamanda, strelitzias, hibiscus and the candlenut tree, native to the area. In the surrounding rainforest an enormous Quandong attracted much interest.

The **Maroochy Bushland Botanical Garden** is a secluded haven, officially opened only 20 months ago on land purchased in 1997. Twenty-five per cent of the 82hectare site will be cultivated to display plants indigenous to the Sunshine Coast. The rest will remain for bushland conservation. The



designed area is remarkably sensitive to its habitat. It features a beautiful fern gully, peaceful pools and lagoon, a contemplation garden and inspiring bushland walks. Trees of interest include the Red or Soapy Gum (*Alphitonia excelsa*) used by Aborigines to treat sore eyes or to create a lather in water which suffocated fish, and the Rusty Kurrajong



Top: Rhyll Hinwood's sandstone sculpture 'Oakman's Opus'.
Courtesy: Helen Page.

Centre: At Tallaringa Gardens on Mt Tamborine.
Courtesy: Helen Page.

Below: View from the Dalziel Garden at Buderim across the rainforest to Mt Coolum.
Courtesy: Helen Page.

(*Brachychiton bidwillii*) which serves as the logo for the gardens. The master plan for the garden made interesting reading with surveys suggesting overwhelmingly that visitors would be willing to pay an entrance fee to the gardens. The understated natural grace of the garden contrasted strongly with the pizzazz and colour of Roma Street Parklands.

The **Dalziel Garden, Buderim** is close to the site once occupied by Ryhope the home that pioneer James Lindsay built in 1885 and eventually surrounded with a large and notable garden. Today, Hamish and Lindy Dalziel have created a worthy successor in their dramatic escarpment garden comprising several sub-gardens suited to the topography. Hamish's great-great-grandfather was Joseph Henry Maiden, curator of the Sydney Botanical Gardens from 1890 to 1920, so it is no surprise to find a young *Eucalyptus maidenii* in the wild garden, known as 'over the edge', that cascades down the escarpment below the house. Component parts of this impressive property counterpoint each other most effectively. The spaciousness of 'the park' with its sweeping lawns and huge trees (*Eucalyptus citriodora*, *Aleites fordii* and *A. moluccana*, *Tipuana tipu*, and *Cupressus macrocarpa* 'Aurea Saligna') is a foil for the intimate scale of the Japanese garden set under the waving strands of foliage of the pepperina tree (*Schinus areira*), or for rich and turbulent growth of the 'rainforest garden' that tumbles down the steep ravine of a storm water channel. The 180° panoramic view, from the swimming pool terrace, to Mt Coolum and Rainbow Beach contrasts with the confined shade garden and its camellias, vireyas and clivias. It is a thoughtfully planned garden appealing to the senses at all seasons.



The owners describe 7 Orme Road Buderim

as a 'collector's garden'. That is an understatement. It is an Aladdin's Cave overflowing with jewel-like treasures from the plant world. Abounding in colour each specimen outshines the next — salvias, coleus, crotons, conifers, azaleas, bougainvilleas, calatheas, anthuriums and, through a Balinese hand-carved door, bromeliads, mind-blowing bromeliads, thousands of

them like a wonderful tapestry carpeting the exhibition area. Neoregelias, bilbergias, tillandsias, gusmanias, vriesias. The colours are stunning, subtly blending one with another, glowing when back-lit, infinite in their variety, arresting in their profusion, breathtaking in their presentation. It all snatched southerners from their garden comfort zone.

Trafalgar House, Buderim.

In 1912 Charles Horatio Nelson built this charming farmhouse in the colonial Georgian style reminiscent of Hobart or Parramatta. An old-world garden generously planted with roses, lavender, violets, freesias, camellias, heliotrope and there is a romantic orchard. At least that is the initial impression. But a second look discovers the Queensland qualities in the garden — cannas, orchids, tropical lilies, agapanthus, giant poincianas, frangipani, jacaranda. And in the orchard, custard apple, persimmon, lime, lemon, calamondin and macadamia. House and garden have a timeless quality that attracted the present owner Rhonda Vickers by 'its well-mannered elements of restraint, simplicity and unforced charm.' As she says, 'In a world that has changed so much Trafalgar House still satisfies the basic human needs with its serene air of simple comfort.' We had returned to our comfort zone.



AN INTERESTING INNOVATION AT THE BRISBANE CONFERENCE WAS THE DISPLAY OF STUDENT PROJECTS ARRANGED BY MAURICE WILSON WHO IS PRINCIPAL TEACHER (PARKS AND GARDENS) AT THE GROVELY COLLEGE OF TAFE. ONE STUDENT CHOSE TO RESEARCH THOMAS PARK, INDOOROOPILLY, SITE OF THE BOUGAINVILLEA GARDENS FEATURED ON THE COVER OF THE CONFERENCE BOOKLET.



Traces of the Past

BY BRUCE HARGREAVES



Left: Site of Bougainvillea Cottage in Thomas Park, Indooroopilly, 2003. Courtesy: Bruce Hargreaves.

Arriving on Harts Road, once known as Hart Street, and stopping across from the park with its towering palms, an almost eerie feeling of what once was comes over you. It could be just the traces of the remaining garden design, or the old plants, some of which have lost their vigour despite their pride of place, or perhaps it is the remains of structures that once formed part of an impressive garden.

The Patchetts, a local family living in adjacent Bougainvillea Avenue, tell of Sunday School picnics from St Andrew's Anglican Church enjoyed in the shade of the enormous Moreton Bay fig (*Ficus macrophylla*), and of wedding parties that would adorn the grounds throughout the year.

There is significant history and also controversy surrounding Thomas Park. In its heyday as the residence of Henry Thomas it was a great tourist attraction in Brisbane drawing many sightseers. Now it is no more than a council park, beautiful, but somewhat forgotten.

EARLY PROPERTY HOLDERS

Thomas Park is part of the land holding of Portion 67 - Parish Indooroopilly. In February

1867, Portion 67 was purchased by Robert Jarrott who proceeded to clear and farm the land. Within a year he had built a home on the high ground and moved his family there from George Street, Brisbane.

The next 15 years saw an orchard of citrus, other fruits and vegetables and lucerne flourishing on the property and often winning prizes at the semi-annual shows of the East Moreton Farmers Agriculture and Horticulture Association. Jarrott took his produce to market in the city by rowboat until a road, which permitted the use of a horse and dray, reached his boundary (Harts Road) about 1869. A newspaper account in January 1879 recorded that Jarrott's orangery was a favourite place for Brisbane residents to visit with friends in the late 1870s.

Robert Jarrott died in January 1879 and his widow only survived him by three months. His second son, also Robert, carried on the farm for several years and his occupation was recorded as apiarist. The property was subdivided into seven allotments transferred to, and subsequently sold by, the children of the original Robert to new owners as follows:

Subdivision 1: H. Thomas in 1898
 Subdivision 5: A. Carr Lalor in 1889
 Subdivision 2: Thos. Morrow in 1893
 Subdivision 6: Lalor (undated)
 Subdivision 3: Lalor Morrow in 1906
 Subdivision 7: Swain Lalor 1889
 Subdivision 4: Swain Morrow in 1888
 Thomas in 1900

The Thomas family probably acquired more of these subdivisions from Morrow and/or Carr.

During World War II soldiers of the American army occupied the Thomas residence and sewerage lines were installed at that time. After the war the property was sold to the Brisbane City Council in 1948 and after a period of lease the house was demolished. The lower land is today part of a golf course, while the elevated portion on Harts Road is retained as a council park.

EARLY PLANTING

Jarrott family records do not show whether that family planted any bougainvilleas, but Miss Anne Jarrott planted camellias sometime in the 1870s and the main camellia plant was thriving in the mid 1920s. Records from 1978 show camellias still growing in Thomas Park. The palm trees are old but again there is nothing recorded to show when they were planted. The bougainvilleas were cultivated, and probably planted, by the Thomas family. They became famous in Brisbane and during the decades of the 1920s and 1930s were visited and viewed by many thousands of people.

THE THOMAS FAMILY

Henry Thomas arrived in Indooroopilly in 1882. He had initially worked as a groom for the Clerk of the NSW Legislative Assembly. Later he trained racehorses for the Dangar family, then moved north to Queensland to operate his own livery stable near Anzac Park in Brisbane. In later years he was to use his property to exercise horses and local families have memories of it also being used for agistment. The horse that Henry Thomas supplied for the use of the Duke of York, later King George V, when he came to review troops after the Boer War, eventually died while living at Bougainvillea Gardens.

A FAMOUS BEAUTY SPOT

In 1929 the Thomas garden was entered in a cottage garden competition but it was disqualified on the ground of its expansive size. However the story published in a local newspaper caused droves of people to visit it and the Thomas family served them morning and afternoon teas.

Bougainvilleas were obviously the main attraction, as were the enormous palms and the



double variety of gerbera (*Gerbera jamesonii*) in beds in the lawn. The front of the house was shrouded in bougainvilleas, in this case the variety *Thomasii*, the variety cultivated by Henry Thomas himself. From the taste of the era, and the occasional photo available, one could assume that such plants as *Platycerium bifurcatum*, crotons, crucifix orchids and possibly hibiscus would have been present as well as the larger plants shown on the 1958 plan. At the rear of the house there were cultivated fields, vegetable patches to the south east, and a large dam at the foot of the rear slope to the south.

Henry Thomas was known for growing plants that would flourish in Brisbane's hot subtropical climate, with dry winters and long wet summers. Plants like bougainvilleas were in their element. As evident from the newspaper photos, many were trained into standards, weeping from a tall stem, or planted in rows and pruned as hedges.

By the 1940s the garden had acquired a worldwide reputation as a beauty spot. It was a popular tourist destination and the Mayor, William Jolly, was known to take guests there on a regular basis. He also commended the generosity of the Thomas family for inviting the public into their home and for collecting donations for the Children's Hospital. At times as much as £40 or £50 was handed over at once.

In 1948 the Brisbane City Council procured the property for £5,000 as part of the Lord Mayor's Long Pocket Riverside Boulevard Park Scheme, on condition that Henry Thomas be allowed to stay on the property as long as he desired. 1958 saw the development of a local housing subdivision of which Bougainvillea Avenue was the beginning.

VANISHING TRADITIONS

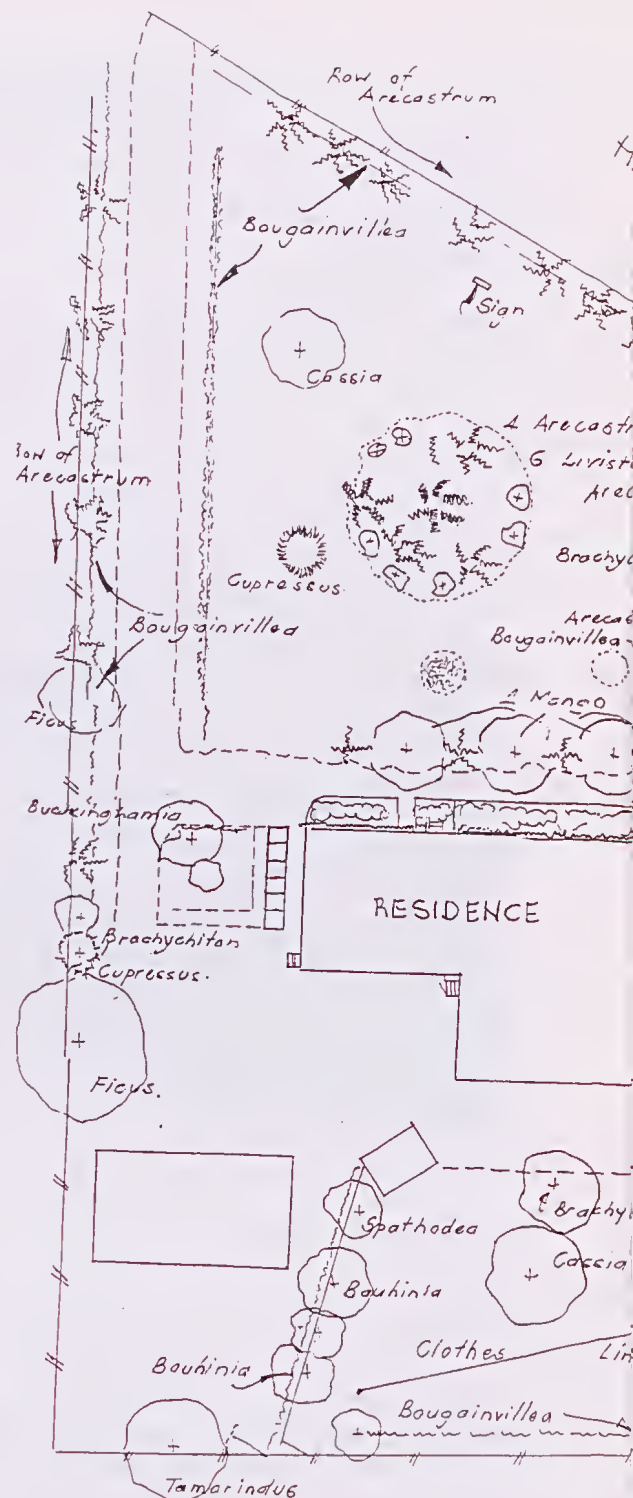
On the death of Henry Thomas, at the age of 93, the city council's new Landscape Architect, Mr A.E. Wilson, was granted a lease on the cottage in the gardens. The key condition of the lease was that the gardens should be made accessible to the

Above: Looking into Thomas Park from Hart's Road.
 Courtesy: Bruce Hargreaves.

There are still a few traces of the building style in the area – wooden blinds, verandas that wrap around, corrugated iron roofs – although most examples have been renovated in the new modern style of architecture. Some of the larger estate homes of Indooroopilly, such as Greylands, home of the first Governor of Queensland, are still intact though tastefully renovated, and Dirleton (in Hunter Street), the former home of the stable-master to Greylands, can also be seen.

Stories of Bougainvillea Gardens live on. The Patchett family tells how a camellia tree which used to attract all the local folk for appreciation of its flower, mysteriously vanished without warning. Then there are tales of the park being swarmed by concerned local residents protesting development such as the building of a bitumen road to the rear of the property to service a sewerage treatment plant on the river bank.

Below: Eastern rear boundary of Thomas Park in 2003.
Courtesy: Bruce Hargreaves.



Many of the original plants, evident only by their size and apparent neglect, are still in place. Old newspaper clippings give a somewhat vague description of the garden layout and refer to the plants that grew there, although reference to the bougainvilleas is more specific.

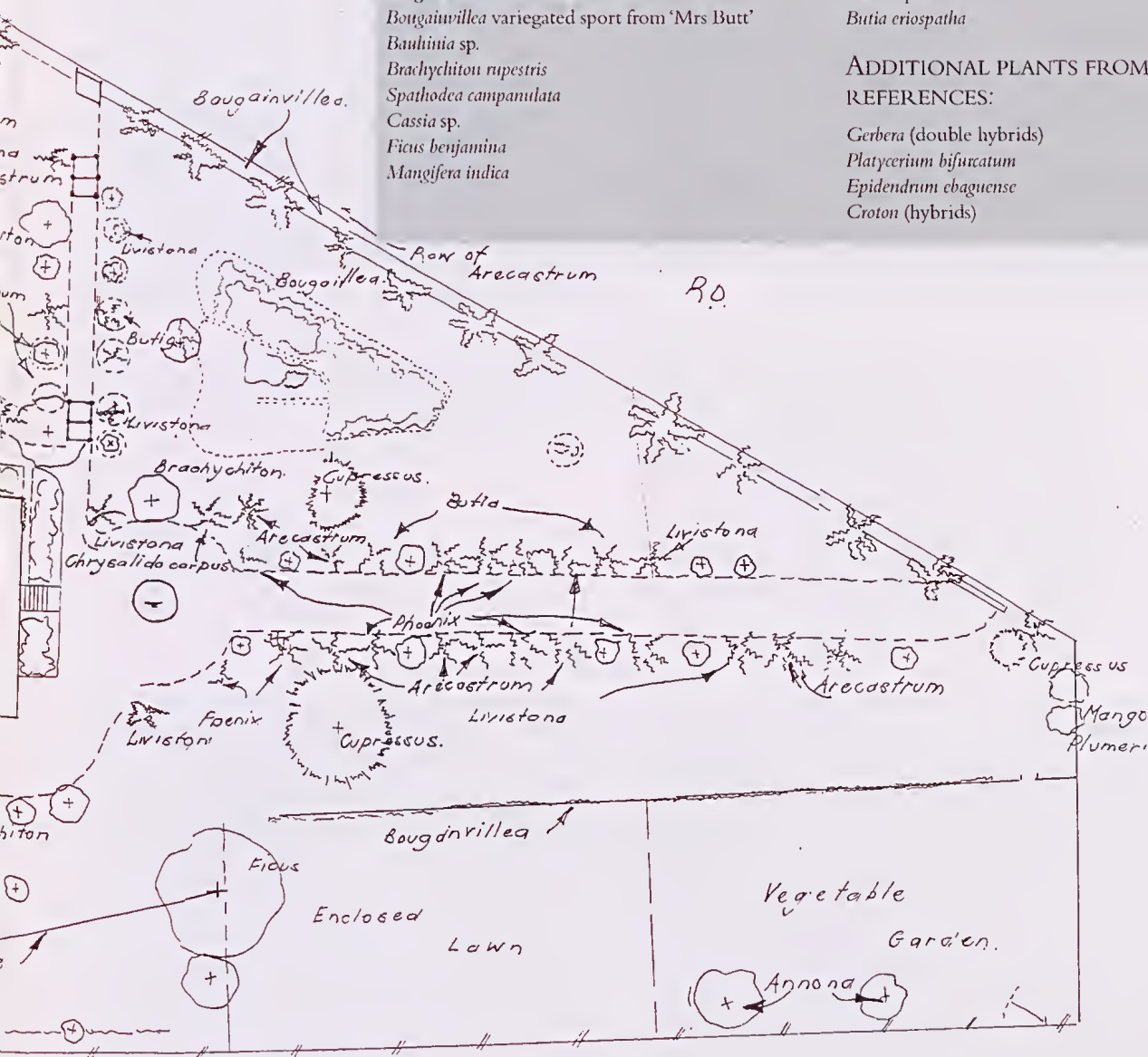
PLANT LIST FROM 1958 PLAN

Tamarindus indica
Bougainvillea 'Thomasii' (bright pink)
Bougainvillea magnifica trauillii (purple) [Unofficially parent to 'Thomasii']
Bougainvillea rosea (deep pink)
Bougainvillea grinleyi (brick red)
Bougainvillea x Buttiana 'Mrs Butt'
Bougainvillea variegated sport from 'Mrs Butt'
Bauhinia sp.
Brachychiton rupestris
Spathodea campanulata
Cassia sp.
Ficus benjamina
Mangifera indica

Plumeria
Phoenix canariensis
Arecastrum romanzoffianum Queen Palm
Cupressis/ Callitris rhomboidea/ benthamii
Chrysaliocarpus lutescens
Cycas revoluta
Butia capitata
Butia eriopatha

ADDITIONAL PLANTS FROM OTHER REFERENCES:

Gerbera (double hybrids)
Platyserium bifurcatum
Epidendrum ebaguense
Croton (hybrids)



THOMAS PARK

The remains of the gardens now consist of specimen plants of mainly large trees and palms, and large overgrown bougainvillea plants. For many years the bougainvillea plants at the front of the property were so overgrown that you could not even see the park itself, however the current maintenance regime is tidier, and the pruning of old plants back into hedges has already commenced, at the brief expense of flowering. The distinct difference being that the weeping standard plants are now part of the hedges, whereas previously they were feature plants above the line of the hedges.

Mr Thomas was apparently proud of his oak tree, normally at home in a cool temperate

climate, which still exists today. The large fig tree has suffered significant pruning over the years, mainly by neighbouring home-owners wishing to make good use of the view to the river and golf course.

The fencing style too has changed over the years, from the original wooden picket fence, to the paling and wire mesh, until today there is no fence at all. The remaining structures have been left in place, and some have been renovated to maintain the look, if not the character, of the previous design. Other park furnishings have been kept to a minimum – to keep the look of a garden area as opposed to that of a public park.



Above: The old *Ficus macrophylla* that was once a popular place for Sunday School Picnics.
Courtesy: Bruce Hargreaves.

There are no remaining hard landscape elements such as paths, paving and steps. Two small trellis structures are really the only indicators that there was once a residential display garden on this site. In terms of the planting layout, most of the large plants are still intact. The overgrown *Ficus benjamina*, *Mangifera indica* and other trees have shaded out the bougainvillea plants. Many of the flowering trees – bauhinia and spathodea – have also outgrown their place and require either

removal or crown management, and as evident, by comparing the plant lists, there are a number of introduced species, planted either by subsequent tenants or by the council.

Bruce Hargreaves has loved plants since childhood and after time in the hospitality industry he has now elected to study horticulture.

PLANTS IDENTIFIED IN 2003 COMPARED WITH 1958 LIST (* INDICATES PLANT INTRODUCED AFTER 1958)

<i>Arecastrum romanoffianum</i>	<i>Bauhinia alba</i>
<i>Calliris columellaris</i> sp.	<i>Lagerstroemia indica</i> *
<i>Buckinghamia celsissima</i> *	<i>Duranta repens</i> *
<i>Jagera pseudorhus</i> *	<i>Ficus benjamina</i>
<i>Mangifera indica</i>	<i>Raphiolepis indica</i> *
<i>Livistona chinensis</i>	<i>Syzygium australe</i> *
<i>Brachychiton rupestris</i>	<i>Eugenia uniflora</i> *
<i>Chrysaliocarpus lutescens</i>	<i>Albizia lebbek</i>
<i>Butia capitata</i>	<i>Quercus</i> sp.
<i>Plumeria alba</i>	<i>Philodendron selloum</i> *
<i>Psidium littorale</i> *	<i>Acacia melanoxylon</i> *

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BOOKSHELF

NEW CONVERSATIONS WITH AN OLD
LANDSCAPE: LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
IN CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIA

Catherin Bull

The Images Publishing Group Pty Ltd, 2002

ISBN 1 876907 65 7

RRP: \$60

REVIEWED BY STUART NIVEN

This is a book about the skills and insights of recent landscape architecture practice in Australia. It covers a group of largely contemporary practitioners who have – over the last 35 years – begun to recast a popular denial of the wonders and circumstances of this continent and its ancient geological and cultural settings.

While recording this 'seachange', it is not about a change in popular culture or taste, at least, not yet. Rather it is about intellectual discovery and the acquiring of confidence across a range of publicly-experienced, or widely-shared, landscapes. As such, it includes the design of urban waterfronts and some of the country's set-piece ceremonial spaces; public parks; new suburban estates; wetlands, river edges, canals, and other water landscapes; national parks; highways and city streets.

It covers the relatively new practices of recovering degraded landscapes, and the careful management and retention of the continent's fragile fresh water resources. It also paints a broad canvas of landscape actions and practices that sustain, rather than deplete or waste, a place's natural resources. In all of this it acknowledges that no landscape is static, and that if landscape architecture is about anything it is about the creative management of change.

I've come to this book, and my reflections on it, from no great knowledge of writings on the Australian landscape from either a specialist or a generalist point of view. What does resonate for me, as a relatively keen observer of my

surroundings, is a version of the dilemma sketched out by Catherin Bull in the opening sections of this handsome and provocative book:

Over its 200 years of settlement much of the Australian landscape has been considered new or different and, as a result, has been unappreciated and poorly treated . . . New arrivals erased much of the existing landscape, replacing what they considered a wilderness waiting to be civilised with new landscapes modelled on those with which they were familiar.

As a recent arrival myself, sometimes very strong feelings of mystery, threat and foreignness have acted as an uneasy filter in my encounters with at least the Victorian parts of this vast and ancient land.

I come from a green, wet, mountainous land – geologically young and set within the physical and climatic circumstances of islands in an ocean. As an immense, flat (at least to my eye), and largely dry continent, the journey from New Zealand to Australia is more than just a cultural jolt. It is a journey between landscape extremes. Consequently, I find myself repeating that new arrival's search for the familiar and the benign, while trying to come to terms with what, at first, seemed harsh, strange and uncomfortable.

This process is far from complete, but it has begun to change. Catherin Bull's book – its beguiling argument, the beauty of photographer Peter Bennett's illustrations, and the way that text and image graphically weave back and forward throughout this argument – is beginning to play a significant part in that slow transformation of my own encounters with the Australian landscape.

Stuart Niven is a Melbourne architect and urban designer with the Victorian Government's Department of Sustainability and Environment.



ITEMS of INTEREST



REPORT FROM THE 24TH AGM

The outgoing chairman Peter Watts presented his report and summarised decisions of the National Management Committee. Highlights of the year were the publication of the acclaimed *Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens* and the first issue of *Studies in Australian Garden History*, (a collection of scholarly, refereed papers published with assistance from the Kindred Spirits Fund), and the re-vamping of the Society's web-site. To offset the slight fall in membership the NMC decided to increase the membership fee from January 2004 and reduce the number of issues of the journal from six to five for the next financial year. On behalf of members, vice-chairman, Richard Heathcote, thanked Peter for his leadership over the past four years and presented him with some books.

Colleen Morris, from NSW, was elected to the National Management Committee and Nigel Higgins joins the committee as state representative from Victoria. Executive members are Colleen Morris (chairman), Richard Heathcote (vice-chairman), Elizabeth Walker (treasurer), and Di Wilkins (secretary).

Guest speaker at the AGM, Christopher Vernon, presented an intriguing picture of Walter Burley Griffin and Marion Mahony in Melbourne. He discussed Marion's interest in local flora, her photography and drawings of the Australian bush, her association with artist Bertha Merfield and the Griffins' work at Newman College and the Australia Café. Christopher also described the plan for a Griffin Institute in Canberra that would encompass a museum, library, and research facilities to broaden the understanding and significance of the work of the Griffins.

REMEMBERING GUILFOYLE

To commemorate the centenary of William Guilfoyle's association with the garden at Mooleric, the Victorian Branch spent a day visiting the Colac Botanic Gardens and the neighbouring private gardens of Mooleric and Turkeith at Birregurra. Tree planting ceremonies marked the occasion. For Colac Botanic Gardens, a young tree with an international provenance – *Quercus schottkyana*, from South Eastern China, obtained from the International Oak Society in California that got the acorn from Kunming Botanic Gardens. *Trachycarpus fortunei* was a happy choice for Mooleric, while *Strelitzia nicolai* suited Turkeith.

APPRECIATION

The packing team for the last journal and the Annual Report included Beryl Black, Jane Bunney, Di Ellerton, Jane Johnson, Beverley and John Joyce, Helen Page, Susan Reidy, Kaye Stokes, and Sandra and John Torpey. Their loyalty to this task is always appreciated.

MAIL BOX

From Jane Brummitt, of Leabrook, South Australia

'I was thrilled to read Helen Woods' article ['Restoring a Garden in the Image of its Creator', *Australian Garden History*, Vol. 15, No. 1, July/August 2003]. ... Without Helen's vision, Nutcote's garden would not have the sense of May Gibbs that it has today – or should I say 'scents', in keeping with May's love of the pun in *Prince Dandelion*! It's sad she is not still doing it, but there is clearly a limit to volunteering on that sort of scale.

I became involved in the saving of Nutcote in 1987, having read about the campaign in the Children's Book Council newsletter. I had a family connection, as May Gibbs's brother Ivan married my aunt, Josephine Porter.'

From Stuart Read in New South Wales

'... in response to Patricia Toolan's article on old roses in cemeteries.

The Heritage Office of NSW funds a part-time cemeteries adviser to the National Trust of Australia (NSW) who is available to provide assistance and advice on cemetery conservation matters. His name is George Gibbons and he can be contacted each Tuesday on (02) 9258 0163. George has prepared some management guidelines for cemeteries, available on request from (02) 9258 0123, or via the Trust's web-site www.nsw.nationaltrust.org.au. Click on 'cemeteries' to find them.

Also with Heritage Office funding the Trust in NSW has been doing cemetery surveys all over the state, including tiny ones, lone graves and family plots on farms. Lisa Murray and former adviser, Chris Betteridge, did this work. George Gibbons would be able to help on any particular cemetery in NSW.'

SOME USEFUL REFERENCES:

- E.J. McBarron, D.H. (Doug) Benson and M.D. Doherty 'The Botany of Old Cemeteries' in the journal *Cunninghamiana* 2 (1) pp. 97-105.
Nancy Steen, *The Charm of Old Roses*
Thomas Christopher, *In Search of Lost Roses*, Bloomsbury, 1989.

DIARY DATES

NOVEMBER

7 Friday

Tasmania, Hobart – Christmas Cocktail Party at the Allport Gallery where guests will have access to the newly acquired complete collection of *Curtis's Botanical Magazine* (1787-1855). **Details:** Deidre Pearson (03) 6225 3084

13 Thursday

Sydney and Northern NSW, Sydney – Rosamund Wallinger, author of *Gertrude Jekyll's Lost Garden*, will speak on *Gertrude Jekyll: her legacy to today's gardeners* at 6.30pm in the Annie Wyatt Room, National Trust, Observatory Hill. **Admission:** AGHS Members \$12, Non-members \$16. Details from Robin Lewarne on (02) 9953 1916.

15 Saturday (until 7 December)

Victoria, Kalorama – Botanical Art Exhibition in Horticultural Hall at Karwarra Australian Plant Garden, Mount Dandenong Tourist Road, Kalorama (Melway 120 B9), 10am to 4pm each day. **Admission:** Adults \$3.50. Children free. Further information (03) 9728 4256.

15-16 Saturday-Sunday

Southern Highlands – Weekend of Garden Visits including Woomargama Station, Holbrook, the garden of Margaret Darling, Patron of the Society. Bookings essential – Margaret Langley (02) 4861 1519 or Kate Madden (02) 4861 6845.

Victoria, Coldstream – Open Rose Garden, Nieuwesteeg Rose Nursery, 4 Tarrawarra Road. Coldstream (Melway 276 B6) 9am to 4pm. **Admission:** \$5 adults, \$3.50 pensioners, \$2 children. Further details (03) 9819 9922.

16 Sunday

Sydney and Northern NSW, Northern Beaches – Pittwater Afternoon – a garden tour and walk. For further information contact Jeanne Villani on (02) 9997 5995.

22 Friday

ACT, Monaro, Riverina – Christmas Party – in the garden of the Vice-Chancellor of ANU, Professor and Mrs Chubb at 5pm. **Details:** Brian Voce (02) 6238 1446.

18-30 (except for Nov. 24)

Victoria, Melbourne – 'Love, Death, Music and Plants', a musical infringement on the life of Baron Ferdinand von Mueller, in Mueller Hall, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra, at 8.15pm. **Special price** for AGHS members – \$20. For bookings phone (03) 9252 2493.

19 Wednesday

Victoria Melbourne Working bee – Bishops court Helen Page (03) 9397 2260.

29 & 30 Saturday and Sunday

Victoria East Melbourne Bishops court 120 Clarendon Street **Garden Opening for Australia's Open Garden Scheme** – plant stall, teas and sausage sizzle to raise funds to support the ongoing upkeep and restoration of this important Melbourne garden. (Melway 2G D3) Helen Page (03) 9397 2260.

DECEMBER

2 Tuesday

Sydney and Northern NSW, Sydney – Research Forum. One of the benefits of the Garden History Research Forum run by the Sydney and Northern NSW Branch of AGHS is the opportunity for members to present small items of research. Members each speak for a maximum of ten minutes about a topic they are researching or a project they have completed. For enquiries and expressions of interest in participating, contact Silas Clifford-Smith on (02) 9569 3417.

6 & 7 Saturday and Sunday

South Australia, Bridgewater – Open Garden – Brampton House, Nicky Downer's Garden in Carey Gully Road [UBD 146:H9]

11 Thursday

Victoria Melbourne Christmas Function -Walk & Talk and BYO Picnic Tea at Metropolitan Golf Club, Golf Road, Oakleigh South (Melway 69 F11). Meet at front door 6-6.30pm. **Enquiries:** Libby Peck (03) 9699 1310 (business hours) or epeck08@netlink.com.au

14 Sunday

South Australia, Stirling – Open Garden – Wattle Hill, Trevor Nottle's garden in Walker St, Stirling [UBD 145:D9] followed by **Branch Christmas Celebration** at Nicky and Alexander Downer's home, Brampton House, Carey Gully Rd, [UBD 146:H9]. RSVP Lyn Hillier (08) 8338 7048. **Cost:** \$5. **Time:** 5pm – 8pm.

17 Wednesday

Victoria, East Melbourne – Working Bee – Bishops court. Helen Page (03) 9397 2260.

JANUARY 2004

9 Friday

Sydney – The Margaret Flockton Award for Botanical Illustration – entries to be submitted by 4pm.

21 Wednesday

Victoria, East Melbourne – Working Bee – Bishops court. Helen Page (03) 9397 2260.

FEBRUARY

12 Thursday

Victoria, Williamstown – Walk and Talk through Williamstown Botanic Gardens. Meet at white iron gates Cnr Giffard & Osbourne Sts [Melway 56 C10] at 6.30pm. Details from Pgoode@hobsonsby.vic.gov.au

ADVANCE NOTICE

15 – 17 October 2004

Sydney – 25th Annual National Conference – Art Gallery of New South Wales.

New Award to Honour Botanical Illustrator

THERE ARE ALMOST 1000 ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE SYDNEY BOTANIC GARDENS ARCHIVE THAT CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO MARGARET FLOCKTON. DESPITE THE ENORMOUS CONTRIBUTION SHE MADE TO EARLY AUSTRALIAN BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATION AND TAXONOMIC RESEARCH, MARGARET'S LIFE AND WORK ARE BARELY DOCUMENTED AND HER NAME IS LITTLE KNOWN.

BY NINA CRONE

Illustration:
Margaret Flockton,
Acacia elata.
Courtesy: Archives,
Royal Botanic
Gardens, Sydney.



Essex born, Margaret Lilian Flockton (1861–1953) studied art and lithography at the South Kensington School of Art. In 1881 she accompanied her sister to Sydney where she worked as a commercial artist before opening her own studio and giving art lessons. Among her students was Mary Maiden, daughter of the Director of the Botanic Gardens in Sydney. During the 1890s she regularly exhibited wildflower studies in exhibitions arranged by the Art Society of New South Wales.¹

J. H. Maiden employed Margaret as Botanical Illustrator in 1901 and for 27 years she produced exquisite botanical illustrations with scientific accuracy. Indeed Maiden considered her 'the most accomplished botanical artist in New South Wales' and he doubted whether she had 'an equal in the Commonwealth'.² Her major works included images for Maiden's *Critical Revision of the Genus Eucalyptus*, the *Forest Flora of NSW* and

Maiden's *Opuntia* (Prickly Pear) publication. She designed Joseph Henry Maiden's personal bookplate and he honoured her in naming a new species of eucalyptus – *Eucalyptus flocktoniae* – the Merrit gum from the southern region of Western Australia.³

Margaret herself collected specimens and wrote and illustrated a small colour volume on lichens as well as *The Wildflowers of Australia* containing 12 plates of coloured lithographs. In addition she produced decorative borders for a souvenir book, *Greetings from Australia*.

The newly established Margaret Flockton Award for Botanical Illustration will allow others to view and appreciate her beautiful drawings as well as rewarding contemporary scientific botanical illustrators for maintaining excellence in their field. The Award is open to artists working in Australia producing botanical illustrations of a high standard.

Prizes of \$5,000 and \$2,000 respectively will be presented to the first and second best entries submitted before 4pm on Friday 9 January 2004. Winning entries will be exhibited at the *Botanica* Exhibition and, with other selected entries, at a special exhibition in the National Herbarium of New South Wales from 12 March to 30 June 2004.

An Information Package outlining entry criteria and assessment criteria, and application forms are available from:

The Friends of the Royal Botanic
Gardens Sydney
Cottage 6, Mrs Macquarie's Road,
Sydney 2000
Telephone (02) 9231 8182
friends@rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au

1 Richard Aitken & Michael Looker (eds), *The Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens*, Oxford, 2002, p.222.

2 Cited: Lionel Gilbert, *The Little Giant*. Kardoorair Press, Sydney, 2001, p.220.

3 See: Stan Kelly *Eucalyptus* Vol. I, Nelson, 1987, Plate 231.